IN THE CLAIMS

1. – 27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently Amended) ~~Use of a lactic acid producing bacterium for the preparation of a nutritive composition~~ Method for the treatment or prophylaxis of lung dysfunction selected from the group consisting of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), aspiration, lung dysfunction due to non specific inhaled irritants, pulmonary oedema, and tracheal stenosis in a subject, ~~wherein said~~ comprising administration of a composition comprising lactic acid producing bacterium which has a significant beneficial effect on airway narrowing determined by measuring the enhanced pause value (PenH) of a test animal.

29. (Currently Amended) ~~Use~~ Method according to claim 28, wherein said lung dysfunction is selected from the group consisting of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), non-allergic asthma, cystic fibrosis, aspiration, endobronchial tumors, endotracheal tumors, lung dysfunction due to non specific inhaled irritants, pulmonary oedema, tracheal stenosis, and vocal cord dysfunction and wherein said composition further comprises at least one other bacterium having anti-inflammation properties.

30. (Currently Amended) ~~Use~~ Method according to claim 28, wherein said lactic acid producing bacterium is of the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium*.

31. (Currently Amended) ~~Use~~ Method according to claim 28, wherein said lactic acid producing bacterium is of the species *Lactobacillus casei*.

32. (Currently Amended) ~~Use~~ Method according to claim 28, wherein said bacterium is strain LMG P-22110 or any strain derived therefrom.

33. (Currently Amended) ~~Use~~ Method according to claim 28, wherein said composition further comprises one or more carriers and/or proteins, and/or carbohydrates, and/or lipids and/or anti-oxidants, and is in liquid, powder, solid or capsulated form.

34. (Currently Amended) ~~Use~~ Method according to claim 28, wherein said composition is administered in an effective amount, said effective amount comprising between about 1×10^6 and about 1×10^{12} colony forming units~~, preferably about 1×10^7 –~~

~~1×10^{11} all colony forming units, more preferably about 1×10^{8} – 5×10^{10} colony forming units per day, most preferably 1×10^{9} – 2×10^{10} colony forming units per day~~ or the equivalent in non-viable cells of said bacterium per day.

35. (Withdrawn) Nutritive composition for treatment or prophylaxis oflung dysfunction selected from the group consisting of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), aspiration, lung dysfunction due to non specific inhaled irritants, pulmonary oedema and tracheal stenosis in a subject, wherein the composition comprises at least one lactic acid producing bacterium having significant beneficial effect on airway narrowing, wherein said significant beneficial effect is determined by measuring the enhanced pause value (PenH) of a test animal.

36. (Withdrawn) Nutritive composition according to claim 35, wherein said lung dysfunction is selected from the group consisting of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), non allergic asthma, cystic fibrosis, aspiration, endobronchial tumors, endotracheal tumors, lung dysfunction due to non specific inhaled irritants, pulmonary oedema, tracheal stenosis, and vocal cord dysfunction further comprising at least one other bacterium having anti¬inflammation properties.

37. (Withdrawn) Composition according to claim 35, wherein said lactic producing acid bacterium is of the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium*.

38. (Withdrawn) Composition according to claim 35, wherein said lactic acid producing bacterium is of the species *Lactobacillus casei*.

39. (Withdrawn) Composition according to claim 35, wherein said bacterium is strain LMG P-22110 or any strain derived therefrom.

40. (Withdrawn) Composition according to claim 8 further comprising one or more carriers and/or proteins and/or carbohydrates and/or lipids and/or anti-oxidants and being in liquid, powder, solid or capsulated form.

41. (Withdrawn) Bacterial strain LMG P-221 1 0, or any strain derived therefrom.

42. (Withdrawn) Composition comprising the strain according to claim 41.

43. (Withdrawn) Composition according to claim 42 being selected from a food, a food supplement or a medicament.

44. (Withdrawn) A container comprising a composition according to claim 43.

45. (Withdrawn) A method for preparing a composition for the treatment or prophylaxis of airway hyper-responsiveness and/or airway resistance in a subject, said method comprising testing the effect of lactic acid producing bacteria on airway hyper-responsiveness and lor increased airway resistance by measuring the PenH of test animals, selecting a bacterial strain which has a significant beneficial effect on airway hyperresponsiveness and/or increased airway resistance in said test animals or human subjects, growing said selected strain and formulating said grown strain so that it becomes suitable for administration to a subject.

46. (Withdrawn) Use of probiotic lactic acid bacteria for the preparation of a medicament for treating or preventing Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in a subject.

47. (Withdrawn) Use according to claim 46, wherein said lactic acid bacteria are dead or on-viable.

48. (New) Method according to claim 28, wherein said composition is administered in an effective amount, said effective amount comprising $1 \times 10^7 - 1 \times 10^{11}$ colony forming units or the equivalent in non-viable cells of said bacteria per day.

49. (New) Method according to claim 28, wherein said composition is administered in an effective amount, said effective amount comprising about $1x\ 10^8 - 5x\ 10^{10}$ colony forming units or the equivalent in non-viable cells of said non-viable cells of said bacteria per day.

50. (New) Method according to claim 28, wherein said composition is administered in an effective amount, said effective amount comprising about $1x\ 10^9 - 2x\ 10^{10}$ colony forming units per day or the equivalent in non-viable cells of said bacteria per day.